Thanks are due to Dr. C. B. Cottrell and Dr. E. C. G. Pinhey for kindly giving, in each case, their own views concerning the above butterfly; and to Baron de Worms for ascertaining that no specimen which matches it could be found in the British Museum (Nat. Hist).

# Notes and Observations

BOOK TALK. — One of the rarest, taxonomically important, and most interesting of entomological books, is A. H. Haworth's *Lepidoptera Britannica.* This somewhat dumpy, unillustrated 8vo., printed on a cheap, poor quality paper, was published in four parts, the first of which appeared in 1803, the last in 1828. Odd parts occasionally come on the market, but the complete work is seldom ever offered for sale. In fact, the book is so rare that in 1859, H. G. Bohn (in Lowndes' *Bibliographer's Manual*) estimated that there were then probably only 50-100 copies in existence.

Especially noteworthy therefore, is item B22 of Messrs. Classey's current catalogue (Special Subject List: Lepidoptera List B), which has all four parts present, with parts 3 and 4 in the *original printed blue paper-covered boards.* The price asked for this bibliographical gem was £400. Several orders were received and the book was bought by Mr. W. De Prins, an Antwerp schoolmaster and editor of the Belgian entomological periodical *Phegea,* who kindly let me examine his latest purchase when I visited him last month. — J. M. CHALMERS-HUNT.

CONSERVATION OF WILD CREATURES AND WILD PLANTS (AMENDMENT) BILL (H.L.). — Many of our readers may be unaware of the threat to their interests posed by the above Bill which has now passed Committee Stage and is to go to the Commons.

This proposes two new Schedules of insects which are to be protected by law. Schedule 3 includes 13 species of butterflies; Schedule 4 includes 73 moths, three bugs, two beetles, 13 dragonflies and 12 Orthopterans.

The Earl of Cranbrook, who is responsible, knows nothing of insects. To him, an egg is an egg, whether it be of an osprey or *pronuba.* He has simply lifted the list of local species about which more information is needed by the Record Centre, which was published some time ago in the *Entomologist's Gazette.*

He proposes that only authorised persons (Schedule 3) or others (Schedule 4) shall be permitted to take or kill more than two specimens in one calendar year in any one 10 kilometre square, provided that they report their action to the Nature Conservancy Commission. This is to cover ova, larvae and pupae, as well as imagines. The N.C.C. consider the Bill unworkable and they have been advised by the Red Book Committee and the B.E.N.H.S. that only three or four of the

species listed are in any danger from collectors. Despite the advice given, the Bill was smuggled through the Committee stage by avoiding mention of actual species because the noble lord is most anxious to get his name to another Bill on the Statute Books. Readers are urged to write to their M.P.s as soon as possible to prevent this stupid nonsense from becoming law.

Schedule 3 includes such common butterflies as *Coenonympha tullia, Lysandra bellargus, Melitaea cinxia* and *Thymelicus actaeon,* while among the moths in Schedule 4 are *Aplasta ononaria, Endromis versicolora, Eupithecia millefoliata* and *Lithosia pygmaeola.* The discovery and known distribution of almost all the species on the lists are the work of amateur entomologists. If the Bill does become law we could all change our hobby to "Prosecuting the Forestry Commission for their wholesale slaughter". — E. H. WILD.

DISSEMINATION IN THE PSYCHIDAE. — Consideration of certain Psychidae raises a problem: how can species with apterous females, and with only small larvae, achieve a reasonable rate of dissemination? In larger species, e.g. *Orgyia antiqua* (Linné) [Lymantriidae], it is reasonable to consider the present distribution as resulting solely from larval perambulations over many generations. The same cannot be assumed of such Psychid genera as *Solenobia.* Furthermore, even if the adults were to walk as well, little benefit would be conferred; many are inactive, or even nearly apodal. Bisexual species could be moved about in courtship — the female could be carried by the male in the mating flight; this is pure conjecture, and I have no evidence for its occurrence.

In parthenogenetic species, it would seem that some mechanical means of transfer must occur, presumably of ova, though small-scale transfers of pupae by wind could perhaps occur. Ova could be transferred relatively easily, either by adhesion to animals, or by being eaten accidentally and surviving their passage through the alimentary canal. Both possibilities appear unlikely at a first glance, but there would seem to be little else available, and examples of both of these techniques can be found used by seeds of plants.

Parthenogenesis may also be partially responsible for the large number of synonyms for many of the Psychidae, though apterogy, and the consequent difficulty of identification, is probably a more major factor. Because of the lack of genetic variation in a parthenogenetic species, each mutation, if it is not eliminated, will give rise to a new gene pool: there will be as many gene pools as there are genotypes. This will lead to a lot of apparent speciation (a fairly obvious mutant may well be construed as a new species), and so to much synonymy, unless occasional bisexuality allows mixing of the gene pools. Parthenogenesis can present a challenge to our definition of the species, and the Psychidae may be the place to resolve it. — P. J. JOHNSON, 7 Haverhill Road, Horseheath, Cambridge, CB1 6QR, 12.iv.1978.